

IN THE CLAIMS:

The listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A fuel filter (2) having a filter housing of an internal combustion engine in which water separated from the fuel may collect inside the filter (2), in which a liquid line (3) leads from an area of the filter housing, which is exposed to fuel and where water that is separated can settle out due to gravity, to a water collecting chamber (4) situated outside the filter housing,

wherein

~~= an upper area of the water collecting chamber (4) is connected by a connecting line (5) installed there to an area of the fuel delivery line (1) of the internal combustion engine, said area of the fuel delivery line being downstream from the fuel filter (2).~~

~~a connection line (5) is configured to deliver separated fuel from an upper area of the water collection chamber (4) to an area of a fuel delivery line (1), that is downstream of the filter (2) and upstream of the internal combustion engine, to mix with fuel that has directly exited the filter (2).~~

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The fuel filter according to Claim 1,

wherein a delivery pump is provided in the flow path between the filter housing and the fuel delivery line (1).

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The fuel filter according to Claim 2,

wherein the delivery pump is designed as a venturi nozzle (6) provided inside the fuel delivery line (1) through which the connecting line (5) opens into the fuel delivery line (1).

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The fuel filter according to Claim 2,

wherein the delivery performance of the delivery pump is designed for a fuel stream to be delivered continuously, wherein at least the amount of water - at least the average amount generated - which is separated within the filter during operation of the fuel filter (1) can be transported back out of the filter housing without backing up.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The fuel filter according to claim 1,

wherein a closable outflow opening is provided in a bottom area of the water collecting chamber (4).

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The fuel filter according to claim 1,

wherein a water level sensor (7) is situated in an upper area of the water collecting chamber (4).

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The fuel filter according to claim 1,

wherein a water separation/retaining device is connected upstream from the connecting line (5), leading out of the water collecting chamber (4), in an area leading out of the water collecting chamber (4).

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A fuel filter (2) having a filter housing of an internal combustion engine in which water separated from the fuel may collect inside the filter (2), in which a liquid line (3) leads from an area of the filter housing, which is exposed to fuel and where water that is separated can settle out due to gravity, to a water collecting chamber (4) situated outside the filter housing,

wherein

~~an upper area of the water collecting chamber (4) is connected by a connecting line (5) installed there to an area of the fuel delivery line (1) of the internal combustion engine, said area of the fuel delivery line being downstream from the fuel filter (2);~~

a connection line (5) is configured to deliver separated fuel from an upper area of the water collection chamber (4) to an area of a fuel delivery line (1), that is downstream of the filter (2) and upstream of the internal combustion engine, to mix with fuel that has directly exited the filter (2);

wherein a delivery pump is provided in the flow path between the filter housing and the fuel delivery line (1); and

wherein the delivery pump is designed as a venturi nozzle (6) provided inside the fuel delivery line (1) through which the connecting line (5) opens into the fuel delivery line (1).